TITLE: MICROBIOLOGICAL RISK IN SAMPLES OF SUGARCANE JUICE SOLD IN THE CITY OF UBERLÂNDIA

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ABSTRACT:
The sugarcane juice known popularly as “garapa” is a nutritious drink, highly energetic, obtained by pressing the sugarcane that is also used for sugar and alcohol production. This drink is much commercialized by formal and street sellers who often lack adequate brewing, storage and handling conditions. The sugarcane has a high content of sugar (sucrose), low protein and water, in addition to presenting minerals such as iron, calcium, potassium, sodium, magnesium and chlorine. From this the sugarcane juice is a naturally favorable medium for the growth of microorganisms, but a greater contamination seems to be through the processes involved in its production, beyond the wrong conditions of manipulation and storage. The objective of this work was to evaluate the microbiological contamination of cane juice commercialized by formal and ambulant sellers in the city of Uberlândia/MG. Ten samples of the product were analyzed for total count of mesophilic bacteria, total and thermotolerant coliforms (MPN/mL), and *Escherichia coli* (also other enteric bacteria), including *Salmonella* spp. Total coliforms were recovered in all samples and thermotolerant in 70% of them, presenting values above the standard established by the current legislation. Not found *Escherichia coli* or *Salmonella* spp., but other enteric bacteria were recovered in all samples, the most prevalent being *Klebsiella pneumoniae.* The results showed high counts of bacteria and evidence the inefficiency of hygienic sanitary conditions of environment and in the handling of product. There is a needed for improvements during all process performed to obtain the sugarcane juice, being necessary the frequent training of these professional, where each stage of production and storage of sugarcane juice performed in adequate way to minimize contamination and presence of pathogenic bacteria.

Key words: sugarcane juice, sanitary conditions, microbiological contamination.

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